

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 38WASHINGTON POST MAGAZINE
4 December 1983

MISSIONS FROM MOSCOW

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The upended glass oblong that glints over the East River is more familiar as the platform for the world's improbable posturings than as a house of spies. But the United Nations, says the Federal Bureau of Investigation, provides cover for the largest concentration of hostile agents in America.

There are about 253 credentialed representatives in the Eastern Bloc missions, perhaps half as many again in support staff—secretaries, chauffeurs, etc.—and more than double the total in the Secretariat itself. They work, ostensibly, as international civil servants who have sworn oaths of primary loyalty to the world body rather than to their country of origin.

The Soviet Union has 111 members in its mission and another 432 in the Secretariat. Phillip Parker, deputy assistant director of the FBI for the intelligence division, says about half of these report in some way to the KGB and almost a third actually draw their pay from the spy masters in Moscow.

"What they discuss at the U.N. has little value," Parker says, "but what an individual knows could be of value. Only through human contact can [a spy] get at that."

Human contact, chatting, cajoling, courting, badgering, is best observed in the delegates' lounge near the General Assembly chamber. Spy hunting here is another sport. There's the elegant fellow with a naked skull and

hooded eyes who gives his pants a vicious jerk as he seats himself in a corner. Another good bet is the man with the thick eyebrows, beetling brow and high cheekbones who sits mournfully waiting for that fateful human contact.

Emilio de Olivares, the general executive assistant to the secretary general, laughs at the exercise. "We'd love to have a formula to know who is KGB or CIA. Every Russian looks suspicious and every man with a trench coat is FBI. What the hell can

they get at the U.N.? I really believe it's paranoia."

But Arkady Shevchenko counters that the espionage that goes on under cover of the U.N. is a serious and threatening business. Shevchenko was under secretary general for political and Security Council affairs, the number-two job at the U.N., until he defected to the United States in 1978 rather than be recalled to Moscow.

"This is one of the very serious efforts of the Soviets to get technology. Why invent a bicycle, they say, when you can get it from the Americans?" he contends, in a heavy Russian accent.

Shevchenko says seven of the 13 Russians he nominally supervised when he was at the Secretariat in fact were operatives of the KGB or the GRU, the Soviet Defense Ministry's secret intelligence agency. "The proportion was the same for the other Eastern Bloc nationals at the Secretariat," he adds. "The chiefs of sections under me would complain that they were never working [on U.N. business], but there was nothing I could do."

Shevchenko says the number of Soviet spies at the U.N. rose dramatically after Yuri Andropov became head of the KGB in 1965. When Shevchenko was in charge of political affairs at the Soviet mission in the late '60s, "I had 28 diplomats under me but only seven were really diplomats. The other 21 were KGB or GRU. They were supposed to work one-third of the time for me so as not to look like idiots, but they didn't. It was embarrassing; I needed help."

Also under Andropov's tenure as KGB chief, the diplomatic rank of the spies at the mission rose, Shevchenko says, from a top post as first secretary to ambassadorial status. Shevchenko says the resident—the chief KGB agent—in New York now is Vladimir Kazakov, who boasts the third highest position in the mission, deputy permanent representative.

The defector, who says he was not employed by the KGB, says the agents sent to New York are graduates of the Soviet Union's elite colleges in electronics, aerospace science and other advanced technical schools and subsequently given two more years of training in espionage at the KGB's own college. "They are real specialists," says Shevchenko with some heat. "They receive a shopping list from Moscow every week, every month. They know exactly where to go for public information and they pretend to be working on U.N. business to establish contacts. You don't realize how stupid [some Americans] are. They drink too much or can't pay for something"—and so they are suborned.

One such graduate, Shevchenko says, was a Soviet Navy captain who came to the United States in the mid-1970s ostensibly to negotiate at the Law of the Sea Conference. He was also, says Shevchenko, a GRU agent. According to Shevchenko, the captain would pose as a German working on U.N. business; he would travel about the country interviewing employes of mining and oil companies for information about deep-sea mining techniques. "He would get a lot of information, some of it classified information," Shevchenko says. Shevchenko is not sure whether the FBI was aware of the captain's activities.

"The FBI has its own policy on who to warn and who to expel," Shevchenko says. The agency did not expel the captain, he adds.

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